

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00  
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-12 MCT-01 OMB-01  
TRSE-00 SY-05 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 OPR-02  
A-01 /098 W

-----059686 101331Z /41

O R 101218Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2637  
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMCONSUL GENOA  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMCONSUL MILAN  
AMCONSUL PALERMO  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
USMISSION USNATO  
AMCONSUL NAPLES

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, IT  
SUBJECT: THE MORO ASSASSINATION

SUMMARY: THE FIRM WISHES OF THE MORO FAMILY THAT THERE BE  
NO STATE FUNERAL, PUBLIC CEREMONIES OR PERIOD OF MOURNING  
HAS HAD A RESTRAINING EFFECT ON THE PUBLIC MANIFESTATIONS  
OF SYMPATHY AND POLITICAL UNITY THAT MAY HAVE BEEN EXPECTED  
IN RESPONSE TO MORO'S BRUTAL ASSASSINATION. WHILE IT WOULD  
BE PREMATURE TO EXCLUDE SOME FORM OF PUBLIC TRIBUTE TO  
MORO'S MEMORY, THE CABINET DECIDED ON MAY 9 AGAINST  
ISSUANCE OF SPECIAL COMMUNIQUE "IN RESPECT FOR THE  
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FAMILY'S DESIRES." THE DC HAS ASKED ITS MEMBERS TO PAY  
TIRIBUTE TO MORO "IN ABSOLUTELY SILENT" WREATH-LAYING  
CEREMONIES AT WAR MEMORIALS. ON THE DAY FOLLOWING THE  
DISCOVERY OF MORO'S BULLET-RIDDLED BODY IN A PARKED CAR  
IN THE HEART OF ROME, THE MORO TRAGEDY DOMINATES CONVER-  
SATION AND THE MEDIA. EXTERNALLY, HOWEVER, AN ATMOSPHERE  
OF NORMALCY PREVAILS, AND THE MAY 14 ADMINISTRATIVE

ELECTIONS ARE TO BE HELD ON SCHEDULE. END SUMMARY.

1. THERE ARE STILL FEW HARD FACTS AVAILABLE AS TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF MORO'S ASSASSINATION AND THE DISCOVERY OF HIS BODY IN A PARKED CAR CLOSE TO DC AND PCI PARTY HEADQUARTERS IN THE HEART OF ROME. IT APPEARS THAT POLICE WERE LED TO THE CAR FOLLOWING A TELEPHONE MESSAGE TO EITHER THE MORO FAMILY OR TO THE SLAIN DC LEADER'S OFFICE. MORO'S FULLY DRESSED BODY WAS FOUND IN FULL VIEW BEHIND THE REAR SEAT OF A SMALL RENAULT STATIONWAGON. AN AUTOPSY WILL BE PERFORMED ON MAY 10. PRELIMINARY REPORTS INDICATE THAT MORO WAS KILLED BY 10-11 BULLETS IN THE CHEST SOME SIX HOURS BEFORE DISCOVERY OF THE CAR ABOUT 1330 ROME TIME. THE KILLERS EVIDENTLY DRESSED MORO WITH HIS JACKET AND OVERCOAT AFTER KILLING. SAND WAS REPORTEDLY DISCOVERED IN HIS CUFFS. THERE IS AS YET NO EVIDENCE AS TO WHERE MORO MAY HAVE BEEN HELD IN CAPTIVITY.

2. THE IMMEDIATE REACTION TO THE ASSASSINATION WAS ONE OF SHOCK AND DISBELIEF. MESSAGES OF CONDOLENCES POURED IN; TRADE UNIONISTS WENT ON STRIKE TO PROTEST VIOLENCE, AND CROWDS GATHERED BEFORE THE DC HEADQUARTERS IN SILENT TRIBUTE. MOBILIZED LARGELY BY THE PCI AND PCI-DOMINATED TRADE UNIONS, DEMONSTRATIONS WERE HELD IN ROME, MILAN AND OTHER CITIES IN A SHOW OF POLITICAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SOLIDARITY AGAINST TERRORISM. PARLIAMENT SUSPENDED ITS SESSIONS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE DAY.

3. LATE IN THE AFTERNOON, HOWEVER, THE MORO FAMILY ISSUED A BRIEF STATEMENT WHICH IN ITS CURTNESS AND UNCOMPROMISING TONE HAD AN IMMEDIATE RESTRAINING EFFECT ON THE PUBLIC MANIFESTATIONS OF SYMPATHY THAT WERE UNDERWAY OR PLANNED. ASKING THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND THE DC FULLY RESPECT "THE PRECISE WILL OF ALDO MORO," THE STATEMENT SAID THIS MEANT "NO PUBLIC MANIFESTATIONS, CEREMONIES OR SPEECHES, NO NATIONAL PERIOD OF MOURNING, NOR STATE FUNERAL OR COMMEMORATIVE MEDALS." THE MESSAGE CONCLUDED WITH A DEMAND FOR SILENCE: "ALDO MORO'S LIFE AND DEATH WILL BE JUDGED BY HISTORY." IN ITS ALLUSION TO MORO'S WISHES, THE STATEMENT UNDOUBTEDLY REFERS TO MORO'S APRIL 24 LETTER TO DC SECRETARY ZACCAGNINI, REMONSTRATING THE GOVERNMENT AND PARTY FOR NOT ACCEDING TO THE TERRORISTS' DEMANDS AND ASKING THAT THEY NOT PARTICIPATE

IN HIS FUNERAL.

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4. THE MORO FAMILY STATEMENT HAS CAUSED DIFFICULTIES  
FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PARTIES IN RESPONDING TO  
THE FELT NEED TO PAY TRIBUTE IN SOME WAY TO MORO AS  
STATESMAN AND PARTY LEADER. AS PRESIDENT LEONE STATED  
IN HIS MESSAGE, "MORO'S DEATH IS A LOSS FOR ALL." AN  
UNNAMED PCI SPOKESMAN REPORTEDLY CRITICIZED THE  
FAMILY'S POSITION, STATING THAT "THE MORO CASE IS NOT  
A PRIVATE AFFAIR."

5. MEETING IN A SPECIAL SESSION, THE CABINET DECIDED  
TO POSTPONE ANY FINAL DECISION. IT ANNOUNCED THAT NO  
SPECIAL COMMUNIQUE HAD BEEN ISSUED ON MORO'S ASSASSINA-  
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TION "IN RESPECT FOR THE WISHES OF THE FAMILY."  
FLAGS WERE ORDERED HUNG AT HALF-MAST. THE DC  
ADOPTED A SIMILAR POSITION. IT REQUESTED DC PARTY  
OFFICES TO RECEIVE EXPRESSIONS OF CONDOLENCES AND  
TO PAY TRIBUTE BY ORGANIZING "ABSOLUTELY SILENT" MARCHES  
TO LAY WREATHS IN MORO'S MEMORY AT MONUMENTS TO THE WAR  
DEAD. IT ALSO SUSPENDED CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY FOR THE MAY  
14 ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS. THE ELECTIONS THEMSELVES,  
HOWEVER, WILL BE HELD ON SCHEDULE.

6. ON MAY 10, LIFE IN ROME AND OTHER ITALIAN CITIES  
PRESENTS EVERY EVIDENCE OF NORMALCY. SCHOOL SESSIONS  
WERE NOT SUSPENDED, BUT TEACHERS ARE REQUESTED TO HOLD  
COMMEMORATIVE GATHERINGS. THE TRADE UNIONS HAVE CALLED  
FOR AN AFTERNOON STRIKE IN ROME (FOR WHICH  
ESSENTIAL SERVICES ARE EXEMPTED) TO PERMIT ATTENDANCE  
AT A DEMONSTRATION OF UNITY TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE  
LEADERS OF ALL THREE MAJOR UNION FEDERATIONS.

7. THE MORO KILLING DOMINATES THE ITALIAN MEDIA. SEVERAL  
PAPERS ISSUED SPECIAL EDITIONS. AMONG THOSE MESSAGES  
OF SYMPATHY FROM FOREIGN LEADERS MOST PROMINENTLY  
MENTIONED WERE THOSE FROM POPE PAUL, PRESIDENT  
CARTER AND UN SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM. GARDNER

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## Message Attributes

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